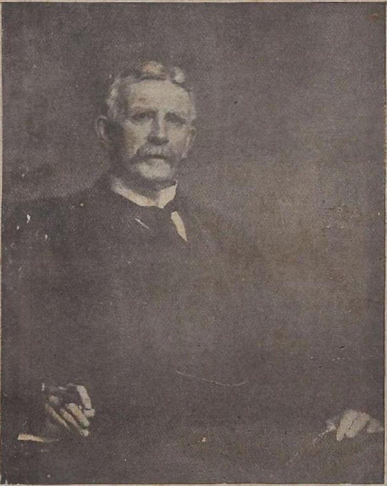
SIR HENRY COTTON

A SKETCH OF

HIS LIFE AND HIS SERVICES TO INDIA



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SIR HENRY COTTON, K. C. S. I.

THE COTTONS AND INDIA.

The earliest Cotton to come out to India was Captain Joseph Cotton who joined the commercial service of the Hon'ble East India Company in the middle of the eighteenth century and was for twenty-eight years one of its Directors. A son of his, John Cotton, arrived in India in 1801 as a writer on the Madras Establishment and served for fifteen years as Collector of Tanjore. He also became a Director on retirement, and in 1843 rose to be Chairman of the Hon'ble Court. His son, Joseph John, the father of the subject of this sketch, entered the Madras Civil Service in 1831 and retired in 1863. It was in September, 1845, that Sir Henry Cotton was born to him at Kumbakonam in the Tanjore District.

Mr. Joseph John Cotton had another son who has made his mark in connection with India. This is the Mr. J. S. Cotton who has contributed a volume on India to the "English Citizen Series,"

and a life of Mounstuart Elphinstone to the "Rulers of India" series, and who was appointed by the Secretary of State to be Editor-in-Chief of the recent edition of the "Imperial Gazetteer of India." He has the same generous and sympathetic appreciation of educated Indians as his elder brother who quotes the following paragraph in his "New India," saying: "It is a pleasure to me to quote this passage from my brother's monograph on 'India' in the 'English Citizen Series:'"

Men who speak better English than most Englishmen, who read Mill and Comte, Max Muller and Maine, who occupy with distinction seats on the judicial bench, who administer the affairs of Native States with many millions of inhabitants, who manage cotton mills and conduct the boldest operations of commerce, who edit newspapers in English and correspond on equal terms with the scholars of Europe—these can no longer be treated as an inferior breed.

Sir Henry has in his turn a son in India, Mr. Julian James Cotton, who joined the Madras Civil Service in 1893. "It is my pride," he writes in one place, "that I am, as it were, an hereditary member of the administration." And again, speaking at a Civil Service dinner in 1894, he declared: "I represent a practically continuous service in this country extending over five generations, a distinction probably almost unique, of which any man might be proud."

India, indeed, has never been to him a land of regrets, nor has his residence in India seemed to him an exile. When he left India at the termination of his service, it was with no feeling of joy or relief, such as many an other civilian has avowed. On the contrary, he could not bid farewell to the people of Assam without these words: "It is not a final farewell, I trust. For how is it possible for a man who has devoted his life to India not to look forward to re-visiting the country to which he owes so much?" So at Calcutta: "I can only bid you farewell: not a final farewell, I trust, for I shall assuredly, if life and health are spared me, come among you again." And in December 1904, as President of the National Congress, he did in fact return—to accept at the hands of a grateful people the highest honour that it was in their power to bestow.

SIR HENRY'S OFFICIAL RECORD.

Sir Henry's student days were passed, first at school in Oxford and later at King's College, London, where he especially distinguished himself in English History and literature. His Indian career began on October 29, 1867, when he was posted to the Midnapore District. From that date until 1878 when he became Collector and

Magistrate of Chittagong, he held various posts in the Judicial and Executive lines and in the Secretariat. From Collector he became Secretary to the Board of Revenue, which office he held till 1887 when he officiated as Commissioner of Police and Chairman of the Corporation of Calcutta. He then became successively Revenue, Financial, and Chief Secretary to the Bengal Government. During this period he was appointed a Member of the Legislative Council, and also served as President of the Calcutta Police Commission. In 1892 he was made a C. S. I. Lord Elgin appointed him to act as Home Secretary to the Indian Government in 1896, and in November of that year he was promoted to the Chief Commissionership of Assam. It was from this office that he retired in 1902, receiving a K. C. S. I. on his retirement.

LITERARY ACTIVITIES.

The official duties of Sir Henry Cotton did not exhaust his energies, although he took them more seriously than most civilians do. When on leave in England and in the intervals of official work in India, he both wrote and spoke frequently on topics of interest regarding India. Thus, in 1877, he contributed two papers to the *Fortnightly*

Review, then under the editorship of Mr. John Morley. A "Memorandum on the Revenue History of Chittagong," compiled when he was Collector of the District and Commissioner of the Division bearing that name, is a veritable storehouse of curious information and has been described as a model of official writing. Then, in October, 1879, an article above his signature appeared in the *New Quarterly Review* on the subject of "India's Need and England's Duty." In 1883, while on leave, he delivered before a London audience an address defending the policy of Lord Ripon and adumbrating the views which in November, 1885, he was to expound at length in his volume "New India or India in Transition." Of the many encomiums which this work evoked, one only need be quoted. Mr. John Bright, addressing a Birmingham gathering in the December of that year, said:

> I have been reading within the last few days a very remarkable book called "New India or India in Transition." The author of it is a Mr. Cotton of the Bengal Civil Service, and it is published by Kegan Paul Trench and Co., in London. I give these particulars, because I wish to state that nothing could be happier for this country and India in regard to Indian questions than that the book should be carefully read by every man who, during the last fortnight, has been elected to sit in the House of Commons.

The book has since passed through a number of editions and was revised and enlarged in 1904 and again in 1907. In the present year (1911) Sir Henry has published through Mr. Fisher Unwin a volume of reminiscences, his "Home and Indian Memories."

SOME PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

It would be futile to mention, even as it would be difficult to appreciate adequately, the broad sympathy and magnanimity of Sir Henry Cotton's heart. His political inspiration was derived from Burke and Bright; his political *guru*, if we may use the expression, was the Marquess of Ripon. To Indian readers, this should be sufficient. His philanthropy was of the active sort, and impelled him to seek the good of Indians in every possible way. One of the many ways in which he strove for our welfare was the deep interest he took in young India. It is now a trite saying that India's future rests on the rising generation. But like most trite sayings it is not cared for. Our public men are wont to forget that the work to which they have devoted themselves must be carried on after them, and that the continued progress of the country can be ensured only if the generation now at school and college is thoroughly permeated

with the spirit of enlightened patriotism and self-sacrifice. Sir Henry Cotton's example ought to make our leaders turn more of their energies to the subject of education, as in it lies the only guarantee of real advancement. Sir Henry spared no pains in befriending the youth of Bengal and lost no opportunity of impressing on them the need of cultivating the virtues of the East and the virtues of the West. How lively an interest he took in their affairs and what advice he gave them we shall presently make clear in extracts from the speeches that he delivered year after year in connection with school and college celebrations. Nor was his genuine humanity obscured and marred, as is often the case with Englishmen, by a rough and forbidding exterior. His affability and tenderness were proverbial among us: his kindness and accessibility won recognition from Europeans as well as Indians. With characteristic modesty he would not accept praise for these rare qualities. On one occasion, he replied to an address as follows :—

You say in your address that I have been accessible to all. I remember exactly five years ago, when I was addressed by the then President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, he was good enough to say that I was an eminently accessible official. I was pleased with the compliment at that time, and it comes with greater

force now when it is paid to me by others than my own countrymen. Yet after all, it implies nothing more than that I have not failed in *one of the most elementary of the duties which is imposed on every officer of Government.* I have from the date I first joined as an Assistant Magistrate in Midnapur followed the good old rule I was taught by my forbears—*char darwaza khula* —and have always kept my doors open to all. I have not turned visitors away; I have not kept them waiting unnecessarily; I have listened to them with courtesy and kindness; and if, as must be the case, I have been unable in the vast majority of personal applications to accede to them, I hope I have done something by a patient hearing and a friendly and straightforward refusal to alleviate disappointment. I have learnt much from these interviews which it was important for me to know, and of which I would otherwise have been ignorant. Sir George Campbell, my old master, once declared that he abhorred a *non possumus* reply: I now tell you that the excuse of *fursat nahin* is abhorrent to me. However busy I may have been, I have never wrapped myself up in the excuse that I have no leisure to see any one. The legacy of this example—far less common, I regret to say, than it used to be—I leave behind me. Accessibility may appear to be a small thing in itself. I have called it an elementary duty, and I deserve the lowest modicum of credit for it. But I can assure you—and, through you, proclaim to the great body of public servants to which I belong—that *it is the secret and lies at the root of popular and successful administration in India.*

This passage contains a piece of advice which many men, smaller and less busy than Sir Henry, may lay to heart. With him the charm of his manner was not a mere external grace but the spontaneous expression of true gentleness of disposition. Thus it was that he was ever served most loyally, and "it is one of his proudest boasts

that never once during the course of his career has he had occasion to fine a servant or employé."

To a profound hatred of wrong and injustice he united a spirit of steadfast and fearless advocacy which often brought him into collision with his own countrymen. He shared largely the abuse which Anglo-Indians directed against that good friend of India, Lord Ripon. But this was nothing to the fierce denunciations which his defence of the Assam coolies brought upon him. His indignation on behalf of these poor coolies led him far afield, and we find him breaking through the restraints of official equanimity and striking a note of noble and sincere feeling seldom heard in the stifling atmosphere of the Council Chamber:

> And so the sickening tale goes on. My Lord! I have said enough. Have I not proved my assertion to the letter? Do I not well to be angry? I confess that my blood boils at this recitation of misery and wrong, and I shall be surprised if I do not carry with me the sympathies and have not roused also the indignation of Your Lordship and of the Hon'ble Members of this Council.

Sir Henry's official life was one consistent demonstration of the principle that politics should be subordinate to morals. "I believe," he said, as he bade farewell to the citizens of Calcutta, "in the truth of the teaching—discredited

though it appears to be—that the great problem of modern political life is the subordination of politics to morals. I believe that devotion of the strong to the weak is a primary duty of those in power." And, on another occasion :

We accept the fundamental doctrine of modern social life, the subordination of politics to morals. We claim to test our political action by moral considerations, allowing that for the State as well as for individuals it is the question not of rights but of duties that must take precedence. These are the new principles we have to offer in substitution of the worn-out ideas which have provisionally been employed. This, therefore, is our policy of reconstruction. The policy of the future —which is based alike on the duty of England and on the need of India, on the devotion which is due from a strong nation to a weak and subject people—must be *a policy of national self-sacrifice, voluntary restitution, and disinterested moderation.*

It was this conviction that what is noble and chivalrous in the individual is alone noble and chivalrous in the nation that impelled him, despite the hatred of his countrymen, to range himself on the side of the people of this country.

It was curious to note how often, even a quarter of a century ago and from time to time since, I have been the victim of unqualified denunciation in the columns of the Press. Not for the first time have I stood forth as the champion of the oppressed. I have always been the protector of the weak against the strong, and in the discharge of this duty have trod on the corns of many powerful interests. I am old enough to remember how the most illustrious of Indian officials—Sir Frederick Halliday and Sir John Peter Grant—were attacked with even greater virulence in their day for doing their duty. But

time has triumphantly vindicated their reputation; and I can afford to appeal to the same tribunal. In truth, I am little concerned by the ink-slinging of which I have been the target. I am wanting in the feeling of resentment. I am not a good hater. That is a sign of weakness no doubt: a lack of spirit, I confess. But it so leaves me that I am not very sensibly affected by newspaper attacks. As the old Latin proverb says, there can be no fight when the beating is all on one side.

What distinguished him above all others of his class was the whole-hearted recognition that he made of the great mission of England in India and the thorough application of the doctrine in all his dealings with the people of this land. He had nothing but contempt for the belief so prevalent among Anglo-Indians that India exists for their sole exploitation. In outspoken terms he denounced the narrow view to which Lord Curzon gave expression of the work of Englishmen in India.

The identification of interests of all classes of Europeans in India has been Lord Curzon's consistent endeavour. To the tea-planters of Assam he said: "I look upon all Englishmen in this country as engaged in different branches of the same great undertaking. Here we are all fellow-countrymen, comrades, and friends. The fact that some of us earn our livelihood or discharge our duty by the work of administration, and others by cultivating the resources of the soil, does not differentiate us one from the other. These are merely the subdivisions of labour; they are not distinctions of object or purpose or aim." And again on another occasion in addressing the mine-owners he declared: "My work lies in administration, yours in exploitation; but both are aspects of the same question and of the same duty." There is no word of the obli-

gation on English officials to devote themselves to the duty of championing the cause of their suffering fellow-subjects, or of protecting them from oppression; no word of the duty of the strong to protect the weak. The warnings of John Stuart Mill are forgotten. The English in India must be either administrators or exploiters. The ideal of the far-off future is the perfection of the country by the twofold agency of British administartion and British exploiting: all are alike engaged in the country's advancement. There is no sign of any appreciation of the capacities and claims of the Indian people, or any thought of the place they are to occupy after generations of foreign administration and exploitation. And yet the thought is one that must be always with us. The prosperity of a country has no meaning apart from that of the human beings who are born and dwell in it. To Englishmen the country may mean the soil of India, with all that is above and below it. To Indians it can only mean the people. This theory of identical British interests denotes, no doubt, the advancement of Englishmen, but it does not connote the welfare and happiness of the children of the soil,

Contrast with this Sir Henry's own ideal.

It is an easy task to administer uprightly the affairs of a docile and subject people; it is easy to lead our victorious armies among imperfectly armed and semi-savage nationalities, to annex provinces and by despotic rule evolve order out of chaos. *It is a sublimer function of Imperial dominion to weld the varying races under our sway into one great Empire "broad-based upon the people's will," to fan the glowing embers of their national existence and to wait upon, foster and protect their instinctive tendencies.* We need for our rulers the qualities of statesmanship rather than of administrative ability. What is wanted is the pervading presence of a spirit of relativity in the Government, of a capacity to refrain from unnecessary action, and above all of a hearty sympathy with the wishes and interests of the governed. It is not for any conduct of mine as an administrator that you are assembled together this evening, but it is because you recog-

ni se that my life's work has been devoted to bridging the gulf which separates the English from the Indian races. It has been said that "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet." That is a false and jarring note inspired by a minor prophet. The East has met the West, and it is the highest duty of Occidental and Oriental alike, whose lot has cast them on the border line, to soften asperities and alleviate the friction of the contact. It is because I have done this or striven to do it that you have come here in my honour.

The passage is from Sir Henry's last speech in India before he retired from the Civil Service. Nor was he afraid of enunciating this doctrine, when occasion needed, to his own countrymen. At a Civil Service dinner in 1894, he spoke to the same effect.

The times of change, in which we live, demand from us higher qualities than those of mere administrators. We must attain to statesmanship if we are to prove worthy of our position. I will not define what I mean by this word, but I remember that John Bright on a memorable occasion declared that statesmanship consisted in foreseeing quite as much as in doing. Now we are passing through a period of transition in this country, and no man can stem the flood of changes which are imminent any more than could Canute at the suggestion of his fatuous courtiers withstand the tide, or Mrs. Partington dry up the rising Atlantic with her mop. We must adapt ourselves to the altered conditions of our environment, and it devolves on us who represent the Government of the country to exercise the influence and power with which we are vested by bridging over the transition so that changes shall take place with the minimum of friction or disturbance. The senior members of the Service like myself can foresee the difficulties of our situation; but the sands of our official life are running out and the solution of them will not rest with us; it is on you, my younger friends, that the responsibiltiy mainly

depends. The difficulties with which you are confronted are far greater than any of those with which the Civil Service has ever before been called on to deal, and you must show yourselves equal to overcoming them. You can only overcome them by foresight and by a policy of sympathy, patience, and conciliation.

Is it cause for wonder that the whole country lamented the injustice which denied to Sir Henry the promotion to the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal because he had dared to expose the tyrannous and short-sighted policy of the Assam tea-planters? The demonstrations of affection and esteem which accompanied his departure from India were comparable in sincerity and enthusiasm only to the ovations that marked the departure of Lord Ripon. In language of studied moderation the Maharaja of Durbhanga gave expression to the thoughts of India's millions:

For thirty-five years, he has devoted himself to us and has won our affection and confidence to an extent which does not fall to the lot of many officials in India, and we cannot bear to think that a few arbitrary months are to shut him out from closing his career among us in the highest post that lies open to an Indian Government servant. But, if it so be that he does not return to us, we must content ourselves with wishing him a long and happy life in England, secure in the recollection of good deeds performed and valiant service rendered, and conscious of the heart-felt affection and regard of the thousands over whom he has exercised authority not only in Assam but in Bengal. *Sir Henry Cotton knows us, and we know him: and there is a bond between us, which neither time nor space can loosen or sever.*

THE EDUCATED CLASSES.

We proceed to quote a number of extracts from Sir Henry's writings, illustrative of his opinions upon certain topics of interest. Take the subject of the educated classes. Sir Henry does not of course share the dislike and jealousy which is usually displayed by Anglo-Indians towards these. But he is not blind to their defects. He says in "New India":

I cannot but observe that the class, as a whole, labours under defects which are not less serious because they are the result of circumstances over which it has little or no control. The class is educated—highly educated as compared with the mass of the people: who can wonder that it should be conceited? The class is debarred from holding the highest offices under Government; who can wonder that it should be discontented? The class is an artificial and exotic product: who can wonder that it should be internally torn by a life of self-contradiction more or less in almost every individual instance?

In another passage he deals with the trying circumstances in which educated Indians are apt to find themselves:

It is true that they have not altogether escaped the vices of the West; but the virtues of the West, which they have successfully assimilated, immeasurably turn the scale. The difficulties under which they labour are occasioned by the abrupt departures from old habit and custom, the domestic discords, the social dissensions, the religious confusion, the tenebrous rationalism which insufficiently supplies the place of a belief in the old theology, the bitter and increasing sense of political discontent, the growing irritation arising from the existence

of racial disability and prejudice, and the very life of concealment and even of self-deception which as individuals they are so often compelled to lead. The gravity of these difficulties it is almost impossible to exaggerate.

Educated Indians, it is sometimes said, have turned their back upon the past of their country, and without ability to shape their future, are blindly aping the West. Is not this fraught with serious consequences? Sir Henry is hopeful.

The vast majority of Hindu thinkers have formed themselves into a party of reaction against the voice of a crude and empirical rationalism which seeks only to decry the social monuments raised in ancient times by Brahmin theocrats and legislators, to vilify the past in order to glorify the present, and to sing the shallow glories of an immature civilisation with praises never accorded to the greatest triumphs of humanity in the past. The innate conservatism of the nation is beyond the power of any foreign civilisation to shatter. The stability of the Hindu character could have shown itself in no way more conspicuously than by the wisdom with which it has bent itself before the irresistible rush of Western thought, and has still preserved amidst all the havoc of destruction an underlying current of religious sentiment, and a firm conviction that social and moral order can only rest upon a religious basis.

Are educated Indians as a class loyal or disloyal to British rule? Sir Henry believes that our expressions of loyalty on public occasions may be accepted in too literal a spirit. Though in a measure genuine, he finds exaggeration in them:

The truth of all the manifestations on the part of the educated native community is that they are evidence, not of the zeal of the natives of India in support of our

Government, but of their anxiety that the Government may not be replaced by a worse one. They are signs neither of loyalty nor disloyalty. The use of such words as loyalty and disloyalty is meaningless when applied to the natives of a dependency like India. They are loyal in that they appreciate the advantages of British rule, and are grateful to the British Government for the benefits which have been conferred on them. If this constitutes loyalty, they are loyal. They do not demand that the British ascendancy should be subverted. But they are embittered; deeply embittered, at their exclusion from power, at the deliberate neglect of assurances in their favour solemnly made and repeatedly renewed, at the contemptuous manner in which they are treated by Europeans, and at the insolence with which their legitimate aspirations are spurned and set aside. If it is disloyalty to attempt to wring concessions from the Government by all fair means within their power, they are disloyal. If it is disloyalty, when excluded from office themselves, to watch and censure, often in no measured terms, the abuses of the authority exercised over them by Englishmen, they are disloyal. In the formation of public opinion they place themselves in opposition to the ruling race, and in vindication of their own rights criticise freely the policy of their governors and the action of the executive and judicial officers of Government. If this constitutes disloyalty, then they are disloyal. But they are not disloyal if disloyalty consists in the feeling that they would wish to see the English Government driven from India. That is not the feeling of the educated classes, and it is not the feeling of the nation. They tolerate the existence of our Government as an irrevocable necessity, which has done immense service to them in the past, but which they are determined to modify until it adapts itself to changes which, under its own impulse, have come into existenee outside its constitution. They claim that the Government should repose confidence in them, and not shrink from raising them to the highest posts in civil and military life. They demand real, not nominal, equality, a voice in the government of their own country, and a career in the public service.

On the other hand the Indian people are filled with gratitude towards such individual Englishmen as have lavished sympathy and kindness on them:

I must say that I have often been astonished at the ebullitions of Indian gratitude which are so frequently evoked when English officials, who draw the whole of their salaries from India, have literally done no more than their bare duty by the people of the country in whose service they are employed. The expression of real sympathy with natives is always, in my experience, repaid by a hundredfold degree of respect and gratitude.

Sir Henry deplores the fact that Englishmen so rarely come into contact with the best type of Indians. They know only the place-hunters and the title-seekers who are ever ready to abase themselves and to deride their countrymen for the delectation of their foreign patrons:

The really best men among the natives of India, who influence opinion and lead society not less by their intellectual accomplishments than in virtue of the moral qualities of honesty and independence, are naturally of a more retiring disposition and somewhat proud. They do not care to make the acquaintance of Government officials if they can help it, and they do not thrust themselves on the Government. They are not to be found on railway platforms to receive officials or bid them good-bye; they do not attend meetings with the sole object of picking up influential acquaintances. They do not dedicate books to officials, organise ovations for them, or seek to perpetuate their names by public buildings, roads, and so forth. Wise in their own reticence, dignified in their self-respect, the true leaders of Indian opinion pursue their own course with as little

communication with Europeans as is consistent with the exercise of their full influence. Englishmen hear little of them, and the Government, as a rule, knows them not; but their names are household words among the homes of the people.

Between such genuine Indians, "the voice and brain of the country," as Sir Henry calls them, and Englishmen in India the gulf is widening. Time was when the English official was wont to stand by the Indian people as against the English non-official: to-day all classes of Englishmen unite together. Lord Curzon's policy served but to emphasize the race distinction. Sir Henry holds that for the aggravation of this bitterness the Englishman is more responsible than the Indian. Among the causes of the estrangement is the unwillingness of the Government of India to admit the Indian to an increased share in the administration of the country, a share to which by education and ability he is entitled.

But the Government is irresponsive: it remains the same, a monopoly of the ruling race, and so far from there being any real advance in the direction of popular concessions, a distinct reactionary impulse animates its counsels. There is no diminution of suspicion, distrust, and dislike of the national movement. The aim and end of the new Imperial policy is to knit with closer bonds the power of the British Empire over India, to proclaim and establish that supremacy through ceremonies of pomp and pageantry, and by means of British capital to exploit the country in the economic interests of the British nation. The encouragement of Indian aspi-

rations falls not within its ken. It would be strange, indeed, if the fire of a patriotic opposition were not kindled. A sense of political disabilities is the dominant note of discontent among the educated classes, and to this has been superadded the consciousness of the economic evil which the exploitation of the country by foreign capital and foreign agencies inflicts on it. Their anti-official sentiment is due to their practical exclusion from participation in the higher official life of their country; the anti-commercial feeling is due to their practical exclusion from participation in the higher walks of industrial and commercial life. The burning embers are slowly rising into a flame. There is a growing spirit of antagonism not less to the commercial than to the official representatives of British rule; the great gulf which separates Englishmen from Indians is widening, and the increased bitterness of race feeling is now reflected by Indian as well as by English prejudice.

YOUNG INDIA.

Sir Henry was able to see that the generations which had come under the influence of English education were distinguished for their self-respect and independence. But he did not ignore the charges of irreverence and undutifulness which had been brought against them. As long ago as 1886, he was ready to apply the warning:

The Indian races are pre-eminent for their grateful, reverential, and religious instincts; these are Oriental virtues which you must allow nothing to obliterate; at the same time, undismayed by hostile criticism, you must foster self-respect, self-control, and all those emphatically Occidental virtues which are the outcome of the struggles for freedom, which have only been successful after centuries of effort in Western Europe.

Sir Henry has no faith in moral text-books. Schools, in his opinion, can do little directly to instruct youth in moral virtues. He looks to the home for moral training:

Boys are boys all the world over, and nowhere do I believe that their character has been moulded for good or bad by the books they read as school exercises: it is moulded partially by their teachers, more by their friends and associates and most of all by their parents, their brothers and sisters at home. It is the influence of the family circle which shapes the *morale* of youths in all countries and certainly not less in India than elsewhere. Where then we see a tendency in the young generation to become disrespectful and turbulent let us remember that the blame belongs not only to the system of education but also to the parents of the boys who do not always exercise over them that healthy influence which they ought to have.

A certain class of critics, both English and Indian, profess to regard with misgiving the tendency of young men at school and college to occupy themselves with political questions. Sir Henry has profound faith in the blessedness of youth, and regards this tendency with no such fear:

I do not forget that the student class has been largely instrumental in the formation of public opinion in Europe, and I am not surprised that the students in India should be active in the dissemination of opinion in that country. The vitality of the movement and the surest guarantee of its persistence are to be found in the fact that it is taken up by those who have all the vigour and energy of youth. No wise statesman in any country, and least of all in India, where education, which has roused all this movement, is still young, and

New India, to which the movement has given birth, is still in its infancy, will venture to despise the public opinion which emanates from youthful agitators and patriots. For it is these men, the striplings of the present generation, who are the fathers of the next.

Early marriage he looks upon as a serious menace to the growth of the moral feeling among the young. He does not attach the slightest value to the argument that it protects young people from all temptation to immorality by a timely fixing of the affections. To him moral training consists in the control of the youthful impulse, and he considers it a distinct loss to the cause of morality that all occasion for the exercise of moral restraint should be removed by premature provision of the means for the gratification of the youthful appetite :

The moral training of the young must always be lamentably neglected so long as the most selfish of all instincts is undisciplined and uncontrolled. The key-note of moral discipline is self-control. The alleged necessity of yielding to sexual appetite at an early age is utterly without foundation, and is disproved by the fact that in innumerable cases the desire has been successfully overcome. A life of labour, and, still more, the constant influence of deep family affection, are the best protection in all cases. It is a mother's holiest duty to secure her son against vice, and it is nothing short of a gross insult to human nature to assume that the family influence rightly exercised is not sufficient to preserve the younger members of the family pure in body and mind. Nothing can be more objectionable from the point of view of sexual morality than that from their early infancy boys and girls should be accustomed

to hear from their parents and grand-parents about marriage, and the relationship between husbands and wives. But that Hindu children are so accustomed cannot be denied. The evil is a palpable one, which it is incumbent on the educated members of the community to eradicate. Legislation or no legislation, and be the age of consent under the Penal Code what it may, there is need of a complete revolution in public opinion on this serious and momentous question. Among Hindu families, as at present constituted, the children are not subjected to the moral discipline which is essential to the proper growth of their body, character, and intellect. Early marriage, and all the associations connected with it, are destructive to purity and self-control. Nothing is commoner than to have early marriage defended from a moral standpoint; but never was there a grosser perversion of the very essence and object of true moral discipline, and it is, above all others, from the point of view of morality that early marriage stands self-condemned.

CASTE.

Another social problem on which Sir Henry holds pronounced views is the vexed question of caste. He holds that caste has done much for India in the past, and that it will yet do much for India in the future :

That system has its defects undoubtedly, but they are defects more than counterbalanced by the services it renders. Those reformers who are in the habit of describing caste as the root of all evils in Hindu society overlook the impossibility of uprooting an institution which has taken such a firm hold on the popular mind. They forget that the attempt to abolish caste, if successful, would be attended with the most dangerous consequences, unless some powerful religious influence were brought to bear upon the people in its place. They forget also that caste is still stronger as a social than as a religious institution and that many a man who has

entirely lost his belief in his religion is zealous and tenacious of his position as a high-caste man, and scrupulously performs all customary rites and ceremonies. Caste is now the frame-work which knits together Hindu society; it is the link which maintains the existing religious system of Hinduism in its present order. The problem of the future is *not to destroy caste, but to modify it, to preserve its distinctive conceptions, and to gradually place them upon a social instead of a supernatural basis.*

THE "CRAZE" FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

On India's land problem, her economic position and administrative reform, Sir Henry's views are largely those of the National Congress. No lengthy quotations need be made to illustrate them. But a particularly sane observation on what is called the Indian student's craze for Government service may well be quoted before we proceed to a consideration of Sir Henry's Congress programme generally:

The service of Government possesses potent charms which I at least have no cause to undervalue, and I have no sympathy with the practice so much in vogue of denouncing the natural aspiration of Indian students to obtain an appointment in the service of their own country. It is urged upon these students to drop their exclusive devotion to so-called liberal education and to devote themselves to a course of technical instruction. But it is the simple truth when I say that there is at present no prospect of employment or emolument for them, be they never so profoundly trained in the highest branches of science, or in the most elaborate technical accomplishments. We must look at these matters as practical men would look at them. The great drawback to technical education, as it is now being urged in India,

is that it affords no sufficiently remunerative opening and no satisfactory outlet for an independent career. In the absence of capital, the only support which will give life to the current movement is the guarantee of Government employment.

THE NATIONAL CONGRESS.

The address which Sir Henry Cotton delivered as President of the Twentieth Session of the National Congress, held in Bombay in December, 1904, is full of interest, and we need make no apology for quoting largely from it. Let us begin with what he has to say of the character and functions of that body:

We meet for the furtherance and discussion of national interests. I see before me a vast number of delegates—the number is deliberately limited for convenience sake—representatives of every community, of every rank and profession, as well as religion. Met together are the political leaders of all parts of India. Here you are able to act in concert and to declare in no uncertain accents the common public opinion of the multitudes of whom you are the mouthpiece. You occupy a vantage ground of no mean eminence. Here are the voice and brain of the country. Here, before me, are gathered the representative citizens of a great nation. Yours is a position which no failure in your projects and no neglect of your advice can nullify. You are assembled together—highly trained Zoroastrians, wealthy and energetic natives of Cutch and Guzerat, citizens of this splendid city who mould its destinies alike in commerce and in intellectual pursuits; brilliant and patriotic Mahrattas exulting in the glory of your past and your ancestors; Brahmins from Madras, with your keen and subtle intelligence; Babus from Bengal, strenuous and able, who rule and control public opinion from Peshawar to Chittagong; represent-

atives from the Punjab and the United and Central Provinces; Hindus who are exercising an almost indescribable influence by virtue of the living Hinduism which lies at the heart of your national existence; and followers of Islam, comparatively less in numbers, but animated by the zeal and vigour and austerity which have always characterised the religious history of your race. We are met here in this great representative assembly to lay before the public and the Government a practical programme of policy which covers, I believe, most of the important political and economic problems of the Indian Empire. We do not pretend to prepare any such policy within these walls. The work of educating public opinion is carried on throughout the year, and year by year, by means of the Press and the proceedings of local political bodies and associations. The work is fostered by the pronouncements and speeches of representative Indians who are afforded the opportunity, rare and seldom though it be, of uttering their country's voice in the Council Chambers of the State. In these ways public opinion is formed, a national policy is framed, and in due course it is crystallised into a definite shape. It is our function at the annual meetings of the Indian National Congress to give united and authoritative expression to views on which there is already a consensus of opinion in the country. We are met to-day for such a purpose, and for this duty no organisation is more qualified and none could be better fitted than our own.

THE GROWTH OF A NATIONAL SPIRIT.

What is the real meaning of the movement which has brought you together to-day and animates your thoughts and action? It is the consciousness that your organisation is a national one, and that you are working together in the formation of a national movement with common sentiments of interest and patriotism. The different races, the numberless castes, classes, and creeds of India are welded together in your ranks. This is primarily the result of education, the inestimable boon which, in accordance with a noble and liberal policy, England has extended to India. It is

education, and education on English methods and on the lines of Western civilisation, that has served to unite the varying forces among the Indian populations. The English language is the channel through which you are now able to meet on a common platform, and to give expression to your common interests and aspirations. At the same time the railways, the steamships, the post office, and the telegraph have played their part in closing the gap that used to keep the different provinces of India asunder. I rejoice to see that this great movement is fully recognised by your countrymen. It advances by leaps and bounds. The unmistakable yearning for nationality finds its utterance through a newspaper Press which has now become a potent factor in your politics. I have watched the growth of this Press, rising, in little more than one generation, from struggling, obscure, and fitful efforts, into an organ of great power, criticising the measures of Government with remarkable independence and vigour, and continually checking the abuses of executive authority. I am not blind to its imperfections, but it is impossible not to admire the ability and patriotism with which it is conducted. The unanimity of this Press is as marked as the increase of its influence. The whole of its influence is in the direction of nationalisation. A single note is struck. In every large town in India newspapers are now published, identical in their spirit and in their common object, all aiming and converging at the formation of a single political ideal.

THE IDEAL OF INDIA'S FUTURE.

Caste plays an important part in Sir Henry Cotton's scheme of political reconstruction in India. He pictures the India of the future as a federation of states held together by the suzerain power of Great Britain, and each based on the hierarchical leadership of caste. He is convinced that autonomy and not assimilation is the key-

note of India's political evolution. For this purpose the old social distinctions of India will have to be purified and conserved, not trampled upon and destroyed as they tend to be by the levelling nature of English administration. Even the separatist tendencies of Hindus and Mahomedans must be reckoned with, and their natural inclination to live apart in distinct geographical areas may with advantage be encouraged. Europeans and Eurasians may likewise be encouraged to form settlements of their own in suitable localities. The power and prestige of England will effectively secure the welfare of these communities which may be compared with the Free Cities of Germany or the City Republics of Genoa and Venice.

Let us accustom ourselves to the conception which the realisation of a national spirit in India involves. The present form of British administration cannot survive the fulfilment of those national tendencies which the British Government itself has brought into existence. But India is bound to England as England is to India. England has incurred liabilities not lightly to be set aside, and she should no more break from her past than should India break from the traditions of her history. It was lately declared by a high authority that he could not conceive of a time as remotely possible in which it would be either practicable or desirable that Great Britain should take her hand from the Indian plough. But such is not my conception of India's future. An abrupt retreat would, indeed, be advocated by no one, and the process of reconstruction cannot be effected

otherwise than by slow and gradual means. Many years must elapse before we can expect the consummation of a reconstructive policy. But it is a policy which we should always keep before our eyes. Indian patriots look back on their past with a just sense of pride, and they know that India will again take her own rank among the nations of the East. They are striving for the attainment of this ideal which, however it may be delayed or marred in execution, is sure in the event.

Autonomy is the keynote of England's true relations with her great Colonies. It is the keynote also of India's destiny. It is more than this: it is the destiny of the world. The tendency of Empire in the civilised world is in the direction of compact autonomous States which are federated together and attached by common motives and self-interest to a central power. You have already local legislatures, in which a certain measure of representation has been granted to the Indian people. In the cautious and gradual development of representation, in the increase of your power and influence in India itself, involving the ultimate extension of autonomy, we shall find the appropriate and natural prize and legitimate goal for Indian aspirations. It was the dream of John Bright, and he indulged in no mere mystic prophecy when he foresaw that India would fulfil her ultimate destinies by a process of evolution, out of which she would emerge, not through force or violence as an independent State, or torn from the Mother Country, or abandoned to England's enemies, but as a federated portion of the dominion of the great British Empire. The ideal of an Indian patriot is the establishment of a federation of free and separate States, the United States of India, placed on a fraternal footing with the self-governing Colonies, each with its own local autonomy, cemented together under the ægis of Great Britain. That is a forecast of a future, dim and distant though it be, the gradual realisation of which it is the privilege of Government to regulate, and the aim and hope and aspiration of the Indian people to attain.

This is our ideal of India's future. The process of reconstruction should be always before our eyes.

Changes may, and should, be gradual, but they must come, and we should prepare ourselves for their realisation. Statesmanship consists in foreseeing, and we are all of us the better for the exercise of forethought. Familiarise yourselves, therefore, with a conception of India's future, which gathers as it grows, and insensibly attracts into the political evolution all other great problems of economic and social reform which are awaiting solution.

THE PROBLEM OF WESTERN INFLUENCES ON THE EAST.

The changes that are taking place in India are as remarkable in their social, moral, and religious relations as in their political and economic aspects. It is in the nascent nationalism of the Indian people that Sir Henry finds the magnet which holds together the solvent influences of Western civilisation let loose on the simple society of the East. Under the immediate effect of these influences, old organisations are crumbling up, and India has entered upon a period of transition preparatory to the establishment of a new order.

The result of English education has been to break the continuity of centuries, and the problem now is to bridge over the period of disorder with the least disturbance. Official interference was unavoidable in the first instance—in no other way could a beginning have been made; but the educational movement in India now stands in need of no such stimulus. It is in matters of education more than any other that the people of the country have become ripe for self-government. Systematic education is already falling into the hands of private enterprise. The time has come for the Government to

transfer its educational endowments to the custody of those who have been educated through them. The present system of University education should be reconstituted on a representative basis. A policy which proposes to knit together still tighter the bonds of official control is absolutely retrograde. It has been condemned by every section of Indian opinion; and though it may temporarily prevail it will be as evanescent as it is unsound. It is only through the educated members of your own community that it will be possible to guide your countrymen at large so as to ensure that the changes which are being wrought by contact with the West shall be effected without danger and in a healthy manner. It is reserved for you to link the present with the past and to introduce modifications with due regard to the antecedents which always must powerfully affect the environment in which you are placed. The problem of grafting Western ideas on to an Oriental stock is now ready for solution in the only way in which a successful solution is possible, by means of Orientals who, having been thoroughly imbued with a knowledge of Western civilisation, have at the same time not lost sight of the traditions of their past.

THE KEY-NOTE OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM.

We have said that the views of Sir Henry Cotton on the subject of administrative reform are for the most part identical with those held by the Congress in general. It will be sufficient for our purpose if we give one further extract from the Presidential address which he delivered to that body, concluding with that portion of his speech in which he advocated the reconstitution of the Civil Service and the separation of executive and judicial functions :

The key-note of administrative reform is the gradual substitution of Indian for European official agency. This is the one end towards which you are concentrating your efforts, and the concession of this demand is the only means of satisfying the most reasonable of your legitimate aspirations. Lord Ripon justly urged on behalf of his scheme of local self-government that it would be an instrument of political education. And it may be as truly said that if we desire to eventually establish an independent government we can only do so by training the people to a sense of self-help and self-reliance through familiarity with the details, as well as the principles, of executive administration. We pray that our rulers may be endowed with this desire. It is no unworthy aim that we hold out to them for fulfilment. It is a title to glory all their own that they found a great people sunk in the lowest depths of subjection, and have so ruled them as to make them desirous of all the privileges of citizenship. But however great may be their energy and activity in working through an official agency, it counts as dross if they lack the higher genius of educating the people by making them work for themselves, of evoking their powers by affording them opportunities for their exercise, and of raising them from a condition of mere passive subjection to a capacity for the discharge of higher responsibilities. A nation is the best administered which can manage its own concerns with the least aid from Government; and no system of administration can be progressive or beneficial which crushes out the self-reliance of the people and blights their legitimate aspirations to realise their destiny through their own exertions.

RECONSTITUTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE AND THE SEPARATION OF EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS.

To meet this end the complete reconstitution of the Indian Civil Service is necessary. It is surprising how little change there has been in the form of administration in India during the past century. The character of the Civil Service has been theoretically unchanged. It

is a fine old service, of which I, of all men, have reason to speak with respect. It has enrolled within its ranks men of whom the mother country may well be proud. It is, however, a form of administration both bureaucratic and autocratic, and an organisation suited only to a government by foreigners. It has been perceptibly weakening from its inherent inapplicability to an environment where changes are becoming rapid. It must pass away, after a prolonged period of magnificent work, to be replaced by a more popular system which shall perpetuate its efficiency while avoiding its defects. The Government should now find expression in a form of administration more representative and less concentrated in individuals. The principles of administration for which we are indebted to Lord Ripon have paved the way for this reform, and centralisation is already giving way to local self-government. In the natural course of things administrative officers must be chosen more and more from the permanent residents of the locality. The injurious custom of constant transfers and changes will then cease. The interests of efficiency and economy will alike be served by the appointment of Indians on the spot to perform functions for which we now import foreigners from Europe and Indians brought from every other part of the province than that in which they are employed. In the judicial branch of the service reorganisation is immediately required. The members of the Civil Service, when very young and very ignorant of the language, are vested with magisterial powers beyond comparison greater than those possessed by corresponding functionaries under any civilised Government, and it would be strange indeed if they were not led into occasional errors and sometimes into abuse of power. It is the system that is to blame. There is no longer any reason why, over the greater part of India, important judicial functions should be discharged by persons of immature years, and it is a crying reform in regard to the administration of justice (in all but backward tracts where the patriarchal system must still prevail) that only those persons should be vested with judicial powers whose age, training, and experience afford a guarantee for the proper exercise of authority. Patience

and discrimination, respect for the forms of law, rigid imperviousness to rumour and to outside report—these are some of the qualifications which are the essential attributes of the judicial office. There is no stage in the career of a civilian which affords him the opportunity for their acquisition. The whole training of an Indian civilian unfits him for judicial work. The remedy lies in the complete separation of the judicial from the executive service, and judicial appointments should be reserved, as they are in other countries, for members of the legal profession who are trained to undertake the duties attaching to them. In no other way would the separation be really complete, and by no other process of selection is it possible to secure the proper discharge of judicial functions.

A TRIBUTE TO LORD RIPON.

Before proceeding to consider Sir Henry's work since his retirement, and more especially his work in Parliament, it were well to linger for a moment over his estimate of two Viceroys very dissimilar in character, the Marquess of Ripon and Lord Curzon. The first of our extracts is taken from the eulogy of Lord Ripon addressed to the students of the Ripon College in Calcutta in 1886:

This college is called after the name of our late Viceroy, Lord Ripon. I venerate his name; you all venerate it: you and your children's children will always utter the name of Ripon with reverence and affection. I congratulate you, boys, on being educated at the Ripon College. You will always be proud of having been at a college associated with the name of a Viceroy who identified himself with the cause of the Indian people; and who, although he thereby incurred odium and obloquy from a few, has won the gratitude of

millions. My boys, let the name of Ripon be a beacon and support to you throughout your lives. Many of you have doubtless a hard and trying career before you. But do not lose heart if you seem to fail: be persistent: be resolute: hold fast by your enthusiasm. Remember that no great work can be done in this world without earnestness and enthusiasm. The greatest virtue of Lord Ripon, if I may venture to say so, was his moral earnestness. Be earnest, therefore, as he was, in all that you do, and all that you may attempt.

Sir Henry traces the beginning of a national organisation in India to the occasion of Lord Ripon's departure. For almost the first time, India's millions felt together and acted in union.

The earliest evidence of a national organisation manifested itself in the extraordinary enthusiasm with which the natives of India, of all races and creeds, united to honour Lord Ripon on the occasion of his departure from India. Such demonstrations in honour of a retiring Viceroy are altogether a novel phenomenon. The homage that was tendered to Lord Ripon was never before offered to any foreign ruler. The spectacle of a whole nation stirred by one common impulse of gratitude was never before witnessed in Indian history. No demonstration could have been more characterised by both unanimity and spontaneity. No sign could show more clearly that the germ of a nationality had already sprung into adolescence.

LORD CURZON AS VICEROY.

In his recently published "Indian and Home Memories," Sir Henry Cotton deals outspokenly with Lord Curzon's failure as a Viceroy. From whatever point of view we may regard him, Lord Curzon must always rank as one of the most

notable of Indian Viceroys. He was well equipped for his task. His great natural gifts had been matured by a close local study of the problems of the East, and there was no lack of confidence on his part to apply them to the goal of his aspirations. He loomed large before the British public on a scale unequalled by any of his predecessors : his name was on all men's lips : he surrounded himself with associations of unprecedented pomp and circumstance : there was no department of the administration that he did not reform, and there was no frontier or angle of the Indian Dominions on which he did not leave his mark. And yet he failed. He might have been a great Viceroy. Why is it that he was not? Sir Henry Cotton tells us in a few pregnant sentences :

"The cause of Lord Curzon's failure is not far to seek. Lord Curzon is an autocrat. He believes in a bureaucracy; he believes in officialdom : and above all he believes in himself. His zeal is for the people, but it is not for the people in the abstract; his desire is to govern well, but it is not to govern through the people or with their aid : everything for the people, but nothing by them or through them. The bureaucracy knows what is the best for the people : that was the keynote of his Government. Lord Curzon had no sympathy with the aspirations of the educated classes of the Indian community; he refused to listen to their voice, and seized every opportunity to weaken their influence. He was too much an admirer of his own race to make a successful

ruler of a foreign people. He believes in Englishmen alone. He would think it his duty to notice any representations from a body of European planters or merchants. But he would vouchsafe no recognition to the most reasoned memorials of large and representative Indian bodies. His object was avowedly to strengthen British rule in India, but he was indifferent to the only means by which that end can be attained. He was incapable of realising the truth of Lord Salisbury's warning that those are the truest friends of British rule in India who win the confidence of the people by kindness and sympathy, and that those are the worst enemies of British rule who alienate their affections by unsympathetic treatment. The failure of Lord Curzon's viceroyalty was due to his own limitations. His will must be law; otherwise he would resign. His superiors, as well as his subordinates, must be his instruments, otherwise he would resign. He was a great organiser, but nothing more. His aim was a wise and beneficent Governor-General at the top, a set of provincial authorities perfectly amenable to his touch below, and a cut-and-dried policy at hand for everything. It is a sublimer function of imperial dominion to lead and guide and train the people of a country to manage their own affairs and to afford scope to their political aspirations. Lord Curzon is one of those who labour under a constitutional incapacity to adapt themselves to such an idea. However great may have been his energy and activity in working through official agency, it is the more to be deplored that he should have lacked the higher quality of evoking the powers of the people by affording them opportunities for their exercise, and of raising them from a condition of mere passive subjection to a capacity for the discharge of their legitimate responsibilities."

IN PARLIAMENT.

Since his retirement from the Civil Service, Sir Henry Cotton has not suffered his energies to remain inactive. In 1906, in his sixty-first year,

he was elected a member of the House of Commons for the Eastern Division of the City of Nottingham, converting a Tory majority of 779 into a liberal majority of 1730. It has often been asserted—and among others by Lord Curzon—that every old Anglo-Indian in Parliament inevitably gravitates into a parliamentary bore. Names might easily be quoted in support of this assertion, and it is to the credit of Sir Henry Cotton that he successfully overcame the prejudice. Except on one or two occasions he never spoke in other than Indian debates, and, though it is unfortunately still true that an Indian discussion will empty the House, those Members who were interested in India and did remain would always listen to him with interest as an expert authority upon the subject. It was, however, during questions and not in debate that he more especially made his influence felt. It is never quite satisfactory for a minister to be conscious that his interlocutor knows a great deal more about the subject of a question than he does himself, and this from the nature of the case was invariably the predicament of the Indian Secretary and Under-Secretaries when Sir Henry rose to put a question.

SIR HENRY COTTON AND LORD MORLEY.

Probably the greatest difficulty with which Sir Henry Cotton had to contend in the House of Commons lay in the character of the Secretary of State for India. But here Sir Henry may be permitted to speak for himself once more in the following quotation from "Indian and Home Memories":

What shall I venture to say about Lord Morley of Blackburn—John Morley as he was then—Secretary of State for India? Like all other Liberals I came into the House with an almost idolatrous admiration for his services to the Liberal cause, and I shared the feeling which prevailed in India that at last a good time was coming when grievances would be redressed and an era of contentment, such as had not been known since Lord Ripon's day, would follow. The shock, therefore, was all the greater when it was known that he was as absolutely in the hands of the permanent officials of the India Office as his predecessors had been before him. Perhaps I had not realised, as I might have done, the helpless situation of a new-comer altogether ignorant of Indian affairs, and consequently dependent on his advisers in everything. It may be that I had not sufficiently appreciated that it would need more than ordinary confidence and courage to take a line of action which would bring him into conflict with his own secretaries and the veteran members of his Council. The truth is that he was overwhelmed by the unexpected character of the problems that beset him and the magnitude and complexity of conflicting interest to which he had never before devoted a day's attention. He was not prepared to be confronted in the House of Commons by half-a-dozen members, sitting below the gangway as his own supporters, who were each and all of them experts in their own sphere, and ready enough to render their advice, which was almost invariably antagonistic to that of his own permanent officials. And yet it was always a marvel

to me that he should so easily have surrendered at discretion and abandoned the principles of a lifetime. It was pitiful to see him while he was in the House, dodging us in the lobbies, and avoiding interviews when he could, and shrinking from any personal explanation away from the Front Bench where he was always well primed with official replies. And he must have found it very painful himself, as an old and stalwart Liberal Member of the House of Commons, to hear his recantations invariably cheered from the Opposition Benches amid the depressing silence of his own followers. Although, therefore, it came as another shock, I can hardly say it was a surprise when we heard that Honest John Morley, the *dulce decus* and "*end 'em or mend 'em*" of our young days, had preferred to become a viscount and moved to the serener atmosphere of the House of Lords."

PARTITION AND BOYCOTT.

In the House of Commons there are always innumerable groups organised for this purpose or that among one or another party, and it was only natural that Sir Henry should assume the foremost place in what was known as the Indian group. With the Labour Party at their back and the Irish Party to safeguard them when their ammunition was exhausted, the Indian sympathisers in the House were enabled to maintain a manful struggle on behalf of the elementary civil rights of liberty and justice. Time after time did Sir Henry and his colleagues depict to the Secretary of State in glowing colours the opportunity which offered for righting the wrongs and redressing the griev-

ances of India. But Lord Morley would not hearken. The golden moments slipped by, and there was nothing done. When Sir Henry was pressing Lord Morley in the House on as early a date as February 25th, 1906, the Secretary of State admitted that the Partition of Bengal "was and remains undoubtedly an administrative operation which went wholly and decisively against the wishes of most of the people concerned." But it was "a settled fact," and therefore no action could be taken. "India should now be allowed to take breath, and we should move very slowly." Such were the commonplaces which Lord Morley had learnt from the permanent officials at the India Office. And so it was with the Swadeshi movement. Lord Morley was put up to reply in the House of Commons: "the situation in Eastern Bengal was strained owing to the bitterness existing between Hindus and Mahomedans consequent on the attempts made to compel Mahomedans by violence to abstain from purchasing foreign goods." Again and again Sir Henry brought the true facts to Lord Morley's notice; he implored him to re-open the question of the Partition of Bengal; still there might be peace and quiet where peace and quiet had reigned for generations. The

stern official answer never varied. It was a "settled fact."

THE DEPORTATIONS.

The curtain of unrest rose in the Punjab, and suddenly and without warning came the intelligence that Lala Lajpat Rai had been deported. At once Sir Henry Cotton took the lead in besieging Lord Morley with questions and in driving him from corner to corner in his replies. He had the sympathy of the party at his back, and the facts of the case were on his side. The charges made against Lala Lajpat Rai in the House of Commons have since been deleted by Lord Morley from his published speeches.

The grievances in the Punjab were redressed, for the discontent prevailed among a populace which furnishes the Indian Army with some of its best material. But the Indian Army is not recruited from Bengal. In Sir Henry Cotton's words:

> **Alas that no similar remedies were applied in Bengal. There were no words of concilation there, no prospect was held out of any modification of the Partition, and no concessions were offered. In place thereof there arose a bitterness of feeling between the officials and the educated classes which aggravated the position to breaking point. The bitterness of the feeling was reflected from Bengal to other provinces. A general crusade against 'sedition' was promoted all over India under the Penal Code in the course of which scores of journalists**

and literary men were sentenced to long terms of hard labour instead of to confinement as first class misdemeanants to which by the law of Great Britain political offenders are entitled. Many and many were the appeals we made to Lord Morley to bring the procedure in this respect into line with the law of England. It was pointed out that these men of culture and educational distinction were herded with the most degraded criminals, made to labour at the severest tasks, and marched through the public thoroughfares in fetters and chains. In vain! Lord Morley refused to allow any mitigation of this harsh treatment.

One repressive act of legislation followed upon another, until in 1908 came the startling news that the provisions of Regulation III of 1818 had been again resorted to, and that nine Bengali gentlemen had been taken from their homes, deported, and confined in gaol without charge or trial.

Another storm of indignation burst in the House of Commons, but not one word of satisfaction, or even of explanation, could we obtain. It was at first denied that these men were confined in gaol, so incredible did it seem to the Under-Secretary that such a procedure could be followed. But it was too true. And in prison they remained for fourteen months. They were not even informed by the Government of what they were suspected. But it was generally understood, and I made this assertion in the House without contradiction, that the only reason why the most highly respected of them were deported was that they were strong advocates of the Swadeshi movement. It was not alleged that they were members of a revolutionary movement. And in the speech in which he announced their release Lord Minto not only specified no charge against them, but said he believed the Government were face to face with an

anarchical conspiracy against the British and European communities, thus suggesting that the Swadeshi movement with which the deported men were supposed to have been connected had, through their absence, been superseded by a criminal one and that the Government had actually released them in order to invite their co-operation against this new danger.

SIR HENRY COTTON AND THE LABOUR PARTY.

It was to the Labour Party especially, Sir Henry Cotton tells us in his "Indian and Home Memories," that the Indian parliamentary group was above all indebted:

None of my associations with the House of Commons are more pleasant to re-call than my intimate and friendly relations with the members of the Labour Party. One doughty champion there was who early emerged from its ranks and signalised himself by his eloquent and effective interference in Indian questions—James O'Grady, a busy man if ever there was one in the House, but he spared no time or trouble for the purpose. There followed quickly in his footsteps an even more famous warrior, who had qualified himself for the duty by a personal visit to India. Even as Elijah the Tishbite was greatest among the prophets of Israel, so Keir Hardie is enshrined in the hearts of his followers as the greatest of prophets and teachers in a later day. No one since the time of Fawcett has rendered such service to India in the House of Commons; and of all the friendships I have made in the House I am proudest of the hand of fellowship with Keir Hardie. And last, but not least, was Ramsay Macdonald, the handsomest Member of the House of Commons, who has also visited India and is by common consent the ablest mouthpiece of the party of which he is now the leader. The Labour Party would always go solid with us into the lobby: and so, from one source or another, our composite Indian group could generally command a total vote of seventy or eighty members.

CONCLUSION.

Sir Henry Cotton is not likely to seek again a seat in Parliament. As a result of his strenuous attendance to his duties during the arduous session of 1909, he lost his health, and when the general election came round, he was lying on a bed of sickness and unable to take any part in the contest. With a millionaire against him, who did not hesitate to spend his money, it was not surprising that Sir Henry should have lost his seat, though only by the narrow margin of 152 votes out of a total poll of 11,602 votes. But though no longer a Member of the House of Commons, Sir Henry still continues to take as ardent an interest as ever in the affairs of India. Short as has been his parliamentary career, he may well look back upon it with pride and satisfaction. In his own words:

I was in the House of Commons to advocate Liberal principles everywhere and in everything. I was there to vindicate the elementary principles of freedom of speech and of writing, and the indefeasible right of British subjects to be heard in their defence before being sent to prison. I was there to protest against the infliction of cruel penalties upon political offenders. I was there to support what Mr. Gladstone had once declared to be the duty of a Liberal Government—the systematic enlargement of the liberties of the Indian people.

And in his retirement from active politics, Sir Henry's devotion to his old principles remains the same :

"I entertain a hope," he writes, "that we have at last beheld the dawn of a new method of campaigning along the lines of unalloyed conciliation and sympathetic treatment. If there is anywhere a safe and sure guarantee of British rule in India, it is to be found in a contented people. If we are willing to govern that wonderful country on liberal and sympathetic principles, to show deference to popular wishes, opinions, and aspirations, to encourage and foster the national sentiment of the people, and to unite the educated classes of the community with ourselves in the administration of their own affairs and in formulating a policy in which all can join in furtherance of progress : in this case we need have no cause for anxiety. The best protection of India must always rest on the loyalty, confidence, and affection of the Indian people. The surest way to prevent unrest is to remove the matter of discontent."

APPENDIX.

SPEECH DELIVERED BY SIR HENRY COTTON IN REPLY TO THE FAREWELL ADDRESS, PRESENTED TO HIM ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF BENGAL AT THE TOWN HALL, CALCUTTA. ON THE 6TH MAY 1902.

Maharaja Bahadur, Rajas and Gentlemen, I know not how to utter the thoughts which arise in my breast as I listen to the all too complimentary sentiments expressed in your address and gaze upon this vast and appreciative audience. I cannot and will not attempt to make any adequate reply. Bengal was my home for twenty-nine long and happy years before I went to Assam. It is nearly thirty-five years since I first set foot in this city, a young man full of vigour and enthusiasm and aspirations, with a set determination to consecrate my life not only to the devoted and loyal service of the Government, under which I am proud to have been able te rise to honorable and responsible office, but also directly to the service of the people. I think I may claim to have followed a consistent policy, and though I do not say that there have nct been lapses from the high standard I placed before myself, I have never forgotten to aim at its realization, always remembering that as I have received freely, I must freely give and that the debt I owe to India is one I can never repay. I have tried to place the interests of the people before my own. *Fais ce que dois advienne que pourra.* By this old knightly motto I have striven to be guided. I believe in the truth of the teaching—discredited though it appears to be—that the great problem of modern political life is the subordination of

politics to morals. I believe that devotion of the strong to the weak is a primary duty of those in power. I am not and never have been a very radical reformer. I entertain too high a regard and admiration for the illustrious memories of the mighty dead, whose influence has moulded the present and will direct the future. I know, that, if you are to destroy, you must replace, and I have never advocated any of the revolutionary and destructive suggestions for the reorganisation of Hindu society which from time to time I have seen in ascendance and which have already done so much harm. I believe in the religious as well as in the aristocratic basis of that society. It is true that the old order is changing, giving place to the new, but it devolves on the natural leaders of the Indian people to guide and control the period of transition, so that it may be traversed without disturbance. I have refrained from interference in such matters. But I have put myself forward in an humble way as the minister and interpreter of Government to the people, and in my official capacity have always borne in mind that by the force of personal example and good-will it would be possible for me in the positions I have held to do much to knit together the links which unite the rulers and the ruled. In whatever measure I may have succeeded in this ideal I have my reward. It will not I think, be deemed, mere boasting if I venture to say at the close of my active career in my adopted land that I have been able by the exercise of kindness and sympathy to touch the hearts of a grateful people. I see this union of hearts before me now. The mere duties of administration in India are comparatively easy. It is an easy task to administer uprightly the affairs of a docile and subject people; it is easy to lead our victorious armies among imperfectly armed and semi-savage nationalities, to annex provinces and by despotic rule evolve order out of chaos. It is a sublimer function of Imperial dominion to weld the varying races under our sway into one great Empire "broad-based upon the people's will:" to fan the glowing embers of their national existence and to wait upon, foster and protect their instinctive tendencies. We need for our rulers the qualities of statesmanship rather than

of administrative ability. What is wanted is the pervading presence of a spirit of relativity in the Government, of a capacity to refrain from unnecessary action, and above all of a hearty sympathy with the wishes and interests of the governed. It is not for any conduct of mine as an administrator that you are assembled together this evening, but it is because you recognise that my life's work has been devoted to bridging the gulf which separates the English from the Indian races. It has been said that "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet." That is a false and jarring note inspired by a minor prophet. The East has met the West, and it is the highest duty of Occidental and Oriental alike, whose lot has cast them on the border line, to soften asperities and alleviate the friction of the contact. It is because I have done this or striven to do it that you have come here in my honour. I am now surrounded by troops of friends, of all classes and ranks of the community, Hindus, Mahomedans and my own fellow-countrymen, and what can be more grateful when I have put off my rusted armour and am passing into retirement, than to hear the cheering welcome and affectionate God-speed of my old companions. But alas! how many have faded away since I left this province. Week after week I have been pained by the chronicle of the death of one and then of another and lately by the loss of the nearest and dearest to me of all. There are those present now whom I have known for a generation, who have grown from adolescence into mature manhood with me and who have been associated with me in various stages of my career. I recall your co-operation in the service of the Calcutta Municipality; some of you were my colleagues on the Corporation in the past. I rejoice to see among you so many representative Zemindars of the Province. I have always recognised that the lower orders in India stand in urgent need of an aristocracy above them, that their ignorance and characteristic docility and want of firmness demand the guidance and protection of more powerful superiors. The basis of internal order in this country is to be found in a patrician aristocracy of indigenous growth and trained by past associations to control and lead. I

congratulate you in Bengal on the possession of a permanent settlement, the Magna Charta of the Province. Especially glad am I to have received this address to-day from the hands of my venerated friend Maharaja Bahadur Sir Jotendro Mohun Tagore, the leader of the Hindu community in Calcutta, whose tried and distinguished fidelity to the British Government is only equalled by his devotion to the interests of the public. When I regard his benevolent countenance, what a crowd of associations surge up in my memory! When I gaze upon this sea of friendly faces I can no longer command my utterance. I can only bid you farewell: not a final farewell, I trust, for I shall assuredly, if life and health are spared me, come among you again; but a sincere farewell with the amplest gratitude for all you have done for me and the renewed assurance, although none is needed, that my remaining energies shall continue to be consecrated to the service of the Indian people.

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